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(SOVIET TROOPS)

(BY NICHOLAS DANILOFF)

WASHINGTON (UPI) - THE UNITED STATES HAS DETECTED A NEW SOVIET MILITARY COMMAND STRUCTURE IN CUBA, BUT INTELLIGENCE EXPERTS ARE UNCERTAIN AND DIVIDED OVER WHAT ITS REAL PURPOSE IS, DEFENSE SOURCES SAID TODAY.

SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE HAS ASSURED SEN. DICK STONE, D-FLA., THAT SOVIET ACTIVITIES AT THIS STAGE DO NOT CONSTITUTE VIOLATIONS OF U.S.-SOVIET UNDERSTANDINGS ON CUBA.

NEVERTHELESS, THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY HAS INCREASED SURVEILLANCE OF DEVELOPMENTS ON THE ISLAND 90 MILES OFF THE FLORIDA COAST AND HAS DETECTED A SMALL INCREASE IN SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL IN CUBA.

PENTAGON SPOKESMAN TOM ROSS TERMED THE INCREASE "MODEST" YESTERDAY.

BUT DEFENSE SOURCES SAID TODAY IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE NEW SOVIET ARRIVALS ARE MERELY REPLACEMENT TROOPS, OR THE START OF AN OPERATION TO INCREASE THE SOVIET MILITARY CONTINGENT.

SINCE THERE IS NO CLEAR-CUT CONCLUSION YET AS TO WHAT THE SOVIETS ARE DOING, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO SPEAK OUT PUBLICLY ABOUT SOVIET ACTIVITIES.

HOWEVER, VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD:

- THE COMMAND STRUCTURE IS BASICALLY FOR TRAINING CUBAN TROOPS AND GETTING THEM ACCUSTOMED TO SOVIET-STYLE OPERATIONS.

- THE COMMAND STRUCTURE SERVES AS A HEADQUARTERS APPARATUS FOR ALL SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL IN CUBA.

- THE COMMAND STRUCTURE HAS BEEN PLACED IN CUBA AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS INTRODUCTION OF THOUSANDS OF SOVIET TROOPS ON SHORT NOTICE.

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